

## Summary Police Report

The Global Arctic session – Part 1:

The Global Arctic as a New Geopolitical Context and Asset

08:30-12:00, May 27, 2018

by Prof. Lassi Heininen

This is a Summary Police Report, including highlights by the speakers, from the Global Arctic session – Part 1 “The Global Arctic as a New Geopolitical Context and Asset” on May 27, 2018 at University of Fudan in Shanghai, China. The convener and moderator of the session was Professor Lassi Heininen from University of Lapland, Finland & Senior Research Fellow (associate) at IIASA, Austria.

### Introduction

To begin with, at the beginning of 21<sup>st</sup> century the Arctic as a geographical region is placed within the context of global geopolitics and that of global governance. Due to globalization what happens at the global level in terms of climate change, technology, industrial development, economics, as well as social, cultural and political change, is not only affecting the Arctic; rather, it is transforming it. On the other hand, what takes place today in the Arctic - notably in terms of ice-melting, resource exploitation, transport, as well as knowledge-creation, stability-building, para- and science diplomacy – has significant worldwide implications on the global economy, world politics and the Earth system, as well as, it accelerates global trends. At the same time, we have witnessed a sharp increase in the number of actors interested in the Arctic, and a great diversification has taken place in the background of actors involved. Thus, we have two interrelated systems and research foci, the Earth System and the ‘globalized’ Arctic.

At the heart of the project lies a framework and a methodology for research about the globalized Arctic in the age of the ‘Anthropocene’: The *GlobalArctic* is interpreted here as a new geopolitical context and an asset for interdependence in world politics, as well as used as a research method. This is a fresh point of view in the post-Cold War Arctic geopolitics, with traditional debate between two narratives/perceptions: Whether the Arctic is a “zone of peace” based on the institutionalized cooperation, or, that there are growing tension and conflicts between states? Politically more relevant and scientifically interesting would be to discuss and analyze on the one hand, how global change is transforming the Arctic region, who are interpreted to become new Arctic stakeholders, and how the globalized Arctic effects the rest of the world. And on the other hand, what kind of governance (features and factors), including Arctic and global scales, would be appropriate to face global phenomena, such as the global economy and climate change as wicked environmental problem.

Among frontier perspectives and trends of the early-21<sup>st</sup> century’s globalized Arctic is on the one hand, high geopolitical stability based on the international, institutionalized Arctic cooperation, and on the other hand, the region faces super wicked problems, in particular the combination of pollution & climate change. Between the Arctic states, and supported by Arctic Indigenous Peoples and observer countries of the Arctic Council, there are significant common interests to avoid military

tension and confrontation, and maintain peace and stability, as well as to continue cooperation on environmental protection and keep the Arctic for “scientific purposes” and sustainable business. Following from the common interests, among the special features of, and potential new themes in, Arctic geopolitics are the following: first, the high geopolitical stability based on functional international cooperation makes the Arctic ‘exceptional’ in world politics; second, the ‘Anthropocene’ is at play in the Arctic and as a potential tipping point for the entire EarthSystem; third, following from this geopolitics, security and governance (in the Arctic) are keenly bound together and combined; and final, the ‘Global Arctic’ is a new geopolitical context and asset to (re)formulate world politics with ‘uncommon instabilities’.

### **Main directions and target issues of the session**

The main directions and target issues aimed to be discussed in the session were the following ones:

First, to discuss how global change is transforming the Arctic region, and how the globalized Arctic effects the rest of the world, and how to define the globalized Arctic as a new geopolitical context and method;

Second, to recognize and examine relevant actors/stakeholders in, and of, the global Arctic, both the actors within and outside of the Arctic region, and analyze their interests and influences both within and beyond the region (in world politics and global economy);

Third, to discuss and analyze the role of East Asia, and that of the Pacific North, in Arctic geopolitics, governance and development;

Fourth, to discuss and brainstorm what kind of features and factors of governance, including Arctic and global scales, would be appropriate to face global phenomena, such as the global economy and climate change as wicked environmental problem. As well as to discuss on the role of immaterial values - e.g., shared knowledge, self-determination, paradiplomacy, interplay between science, politics and economics, peace and stability - in world politics and the global economy, in particular, if the global Arctic could be interpreted as a potential asset to (re)shape world politics.

Keywords: The Arctic, Globalization, Geopolitics, Climate change, The environment, China

### **Highlights by the speakers**

The highlights on the presented and discussed themes by the speakers are the following:

*“The Global Arctic as a New Geopolitical Context and Asset – an introduction”* by Lassi Heininen, Professor & University of Lapland & IIASA

1) The significant change from the confrontation of the Cold War into cooperation and high geopolitical stability of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, based on the common interests, is an achievement by the Arctic states. The post-Cold war Arctic is with two-fold development: first, new multi-dimensional dynamics has made Arctic geopolitics global; and second, the globalized Arctic has significant implications worldwide and affects the Earth (System).

2) This new state together with ‘Grand challenges’ (pollution & climate change) makes the ‘global’ Arctic as a new, ‘exceptional’ geopolitical context in world politics & IR. This could be interpreted as a potential asset for a peaceful change to (re)formulate world politics with ‘uncommon instabilities’.

3) Behind is a critical approach of Arctic geopolitics goes beyond 'Realpolitik' and 'politicizes' of the Arctic as physical space, since the environment matters, and recognizes several actors and their identities, emphasizes knowledge and sophisticated power based on research and knowledge.

4) It is possible to face climate change and other 'Grand challenges'. Much depends on the Arctic states' criteria by which they make their decisions, i.e. (re)constructing their reality of post-Cold War Arctic geopolitics. Further, it is possible to go beyond 'political inability'. Furthermore, to make integrated systems assessment what the plausible futures for the Arctic and pathways to those futures, and how robust the strategic plans to develop & protect the Arctic (see, *Arctic Futures Initiative at IIASA*). For that it would be needed is to ask & assess what information do decision makers need to make futures sustainable, and we should give it to them.

*"Arctic Indigenous Peoples' Role in the New Geopolitical Context"* by Gunn-Britt Retter, Head, Arctic and Environment Unit, Saami Council

1) During their 20 years of participation Arctic Indigenous peoples have proven their legitimacy in Arctic affairs around the table of the Arctic Council. It is important that Indigenous peoples meaningfully engage in Arctic dialogue, it is a way to be in charge of their, or our, destiny.

2) There are still traditional sustainable economies in the Arctic, in Saami area this means specially reindeer herding. These livelihoods represent our economies. Therefore we have the rights, as well as should have the opportunity, to develop them. The Arctic region is not an empty place with scattered population just waiting for new opportunities for economic development, and new economic activities should not be evolved at the costs of existing ones.

3) Indigenous knowledge should be equally valued with science. The Arctic Indigenous institutions, such as that of Saami knowledge, need to be strengthened and deal with indigenous/traditional knowledge. These institutions are important to enable Indigenous peoples to be good and equal partners in research initiatives and in developing the Arctic areas.

*"Education and Research for Arctic Development"* by Elena Kudryashova, Professor, Rector, Northern Arctic Federal University

1) The socio-economic development of the Arctic, large-scale industrial projects and a growing demand in knowledge and research imposes responsibility on universities & research institutions to address the tasks of training high-qualified specialists to work in the North, and ensure sustainable development of the northern communities, as well as provide innovations and scientific expertise to support decision-making process.

2) The Russian Arctic Strategy sets research, technology development and international cooperation in the Arctic as the key national priorities. The recent research conducted by Northern Arctic Federal University, NArFU scholars showed that in total 41 Russian research institutions and universities located in the North are involved in doing research for the regional development of the Russian Arctic and supporting the main Russian industrial projects, e.g. Northern Sea Route, shipbuilding, protection of the Arctic ecosystem, energy efficiency and integrated use of bio resources, mineral resource development, telecommunication and other infrastructure, air transportation routes and others. Over 50 Russian universities from 17 Russian regions run circa 700 Arctic-related educational

programs within more than 200 fields of study, where over 61 000 young people get education. The demand for manpower is dramatically increasing for the next 5 years in the majority of economy sectors.

3) Among the institutions providing Arctic research expertise of the Russian Arctic NArFU in Arkhangelsk is the leading educational and research centre. It was set up to serve the Russian strategic objectives in the Arctic, contribute in formulating Russian Arctic research agenda and involving in several national boards and intergovernmental committees with Norway and Finland. NArFU offers the biggest number of circumpolar programmes and has about 20000 students, 75% of its graduates being employed in the enterprises operating in the Russian Arctic. NArFU's expedition called "Arctic Floating University" is a unique research and educational project to explore the Russian Arctic, train students and develop an international dialogue in the Arctic.

4) Due to complexity of the tasks of studying and developing the Arctic networking between universities both national and international levels – e.g. the University of the Arctic and the Russian National Arctic Research and Educational Consortium as the key networks - seems inevitable, and is considered as a successful resource for strengthening global integration, consolidating efforts of different stakeholders to address the common challenges. Acting as scientific and innovation hubs for advanced Arctic knowledge and expertise producing, the universities create new opportunities for Arctic development in close collaboration with industries, authorities and international partners.

*"The Future of the Arctic Cooperation of North-East Asia"* by Zhang Yao, Director, Center for Marine & Polar Studies, Shanghai Institute for International Studies

1) Cooperation in the Arctic and Arctic affairs will help to improve the atmosphere of the relationship between China, Japan and South Korea (ROK).

2) Arctic cooperation between China, Japan and ROK is conducive to their views and common interests in the process of Arctic governance.

3) China, Japan and ROK should coordinate their positions with other countries outside the Arctic so that the Arctic Council can fully reflect all the concerns and opinions of all its member-states and observer countries.

*"Land – Atmosphere Interactions to Climate Change"* by Joni Kujansuu, Research Coordinator East-Asia, CEO, SMEAR Inc.

1)The Earth is facing several environmental challenges on a global scale, called "Grand Challenges". The growing population needs more fresh water, food and energy, which will affect our climate and air quality, and cause ocean acidification, loss of biodiversity and shortages of fresh water and food supplies. Since the Grand Challenges are highly connected and interlinked, they cannot be solved separately. Global SMEAR employs a multiscale way to answer Grand Challenges utilizing clear and ambitious vision. Global SMEAR has multidisciplinary (physics, chemistry, biology, meteorology, etc.) approach, since there is no one discipline nor research group or country who could alone solve these Grand Challenges.

2) The atmosphere closely interacts with the biosphere, hydrosphere, cryosphere and lithosphere as well as with urban surfaces on time scales from seconds to millennia. Changes in one of these

components are directly or indirectly communicated to the others via intricately-linked processes and feedbacks resulting in local, regional and global scale effects on climate and air quality.

3) In order to obtain the needed new knowledge, we need to perform i) targeted laboratory experiments, ii) continuous and comprehensive *in situ* observations in different types of environments or ecosystems and platforms, together with targeted gap-filling laboratory experiments, iii) ground- and satellite-based remote sensing, and iv) multi-scale modelling. Therefore, we have developed SMEAR concept.

4) The long and continuous data series along with versatile measurement equipment of the SMEAR II station provide continuous information on long-term trends in the aerosols, trace gases and greenhouse gases over boreal forests, combined with information on material and energy flows within the forest-atmosphere continuum, making it possible to test novel theories and instrumental techniques under boreal forest conditions.

*“China, Climate Change and Great Power Responsibility”* by Sanna Kopra, Postdoctoral researcher, University of Helsinki

1) Because great powers are assumed to shoulder special responsibilities in international society, responsibility is a principal criterion that states which seek recognition as great powers must fulfil.

2) The UN Security Council has not made a formal resolution on climate change. Yet, the fact that it has held several talks on climate change (2007, 2011, 2013) indicates that climate change is regarded a security risk and hence great powers bear a special responsibility to respond it.

3) In ethical terms, great powers are expected to shoulder special responsibility for climate change for two reasons: a) climate change is a source of potential international conflict and due to their *functional* great power responsibility to maintain international peace and security, great powers bear the main responsibility for the resolution of the problem; b) climate change causes severe harm to the well-being of individual human beings around the world and therefore great powers have a *diplomatic* great power responsibility to promote global endeavours to solve it.

*“China and the Northwest Passage”* by Michael Byers, Professor, University of British Columbia

1) Climate change is opening the Northern Sea Route (NSR) and the Northwest Passage (NWP) to shipping. Both Russia and Canada have disputes with the USA over the legal status of their respective waterways. They claim the NSR and NWP are “internal waters”. The USA claims they are “international straits”.

2) China has not taken a position on these disputes. But it is the world’s largest shipping state. And it has two reasons for supporting Russia and Canada vis-à-vis the USA.

3) Chinese ships and other ships sailing to/from China will need the support of the coastal states for search and rescue, aids to navigation, ports for refuge, etc... The Arctic is a remote region with extreme conditions.

4) China has its own dispute with the USA over the legal status of the Qiongzhou Strait. China claims that it is “internal waters”. The USA claims that it is an “international strait”. China therefore has reason to be concerned about a negative legal precedent in the Arctic, which is what it would create if it did not support Russia and Canada in the NSR and the NWP disputes.

### **Common Highlights**

As a summary to conclude with the following common highlights based on those of all the speakers:

- 1) At the 2010s the Arctic region, after going through significant geopolitical changes, is gone global and faces rapid climate change and other ‘Grand challenges’. For to face these challenges, as well as to go beyond ‘political inability’, more research and new knowledge are needed, as well as to combine traditional/indigenous knowledge and western scientific knowledge. Here (higher) education and international academic networks are inevitable, and seem to be successful.
- 2) There are common interests and growing cooperation between the Arctic states, and between them and Arctic Council observer countries, including eastern Asian countries, China, Japan and South Korea. For them cooperation in Arctic affairs has become an asset to improve a fruitful cooperative atmosphere.
- 3) The global Arctic, with shared interests of Arctic states, Indigenous peoples and observer countries from outside of the region, is interpreted as a new geopolitical context in world politics and asset for cooperation and dialogue.

## Appendix 1. Program of the session

Topic: Global Arctic: A New Opportunity for Development

Part 1. *The Global Arctic as a New Geopolitical Context and Asset*

Organizer: Professor Lassi Heininen

Co-organizer:

Time: 27 May 2018, Morning

Venue: Think-Tank Building at Fudan University

Chair: Prof. Lassi Heininen

	name	topic
	Lassi Heininen	<i>The Global Arctic as a New Geopolitical Context and Asset</i>
	Gunn-Britt Retter	<i>Saami and Arctic Environment</i>
	Elena Kudryashova	<i>Educations and Research for Arctic Development</i>
	Zhao Long	<i>Chinese Approach to Arctic Governance</i>
		Discussion
15-20 minutes		Coffee Break & Group Photo
	Joni Kujansuu	<i>Land – Atmosphere Interactions to Climate Change</i>
	Sanna Kopra	<i>China, Climate Change and Great Power Responsibility</i>
	Michael Byers	<i>China and the Northwest Passage</i>
		Discussion
		Conclusions

## Appendix 2. Abstracts of the presentations

*China and the Northwest Passage*

Michael Byers, Professor & Canada Research Chair in Global Politics and International Law, University of British Columbia.

It is widely assumed that China will eventually side with the United States in its longstanding dispute with Canada about the legal status of the Northwest Passage, and assert that the waterway constitutes an “international strait”. However, this assumption could be incorrect. As this presentation will demonstrate, China’s interests might be better served by supporting Canada’s position that the Northwest Passage constitutes “internal waters”. Doing so would likely be

rewarded with the full cooperation of the coastal state, thus ensuring access to infrastructure and essential services such as search and rescue in what will always be an extremely remote and dangerous region. It would also help to support China's legal position in a similar dispute along its own coastline. In the Northwest Passage and other places, including the Northern Sea Route along the coast of Russia, China interests are likely to be best advanced by cooperation rather than confrontation with Arctic countries.

### *The Global Arctic as a New Geopolitical Context and Asset*

Lassi Heininen, Professor at University of Lapland & Senior Research Scholar (associate) at IIASA

In spite of different perceptions, discourses and media headlines as well as turbulence world politics, the early-21<sup>st</sup> century Arctic is with high geopolitical stability based on international, institutionalized Arctic cooperation. At the same time, the region faces super wicked problems, in particular the combination of pollution & climate change. Between the Arctic states, and supported by Arctic Indigenous Peoples and observer countries of the Arctic Council, there are significant common interests to avoid military tension and confrontation, and maintain peace and stability, as well as continue cooperation on environmental protection, and keep the Arctic for "scientific and educational purposes" and sustainable business. The global Arctic based on intensive international, functional cooperation and high geopolitical stability is an exceptional geopolitical space & context in world politics and IR. Among special features of Arctic geopolitics are that the environment matters - the Arctic is a tipping point for the entire EarthSystem -, and the globalized Arctic is a (potential) geopolitical asset to (re)formulate world politics with 'uncommon instabilities'. The presentation will draw a holistic picture of Arctic geopolitics and IR in the post-Cold War period as an introduction of the session. Its aim is to describe how the high geopolitical stability was achieved, been maintained, and why it seems to be resilient. It briefly analyzes major common interests of the Arctic states to decrease the military tension of the Cold War and increase political stability by causing a transformation from confrontation to environmental cooperation. It also discusses what might be among features of Arctic geopolitics as prerequisites for the transformation. In addition of perceptions and discourses there is an ambivalence on how 'geopolitics' is defined, and how much Arctic geopolitics is impacted by grand environmental challenges. Final, the presentation will ask if Arctic studies promote discourses beyond mainstream IR, and if so, which features would make the Arctic/Arctic geopolitics exceptional.

Keywords: The Arctic, Globalization, Geopolitics, World politics, The environment, Asset

### *China, climate change and great power responsibility*

Sanna Kopra, University of Helsinki

This presentation will give an introduction to a forthcoming book *China and Great Power Responsibility for Climate Change* by Routledge, to be published in August 2018. Based on a premise that great powers have special responsibilities in international society, the book explores the ways in which China's rise to great power status transforms the notions of great power responsibility in general and in the context of international climate politics in particular. International climate politics is especially interesting case of China's emerging notions of great power responsibility because China has increasingly started to identify itself a great power with great responsibilities and it has formulated ambitious climate policies to live up this responsibility. At the same time, the American leadership in great power responsibility for climate change is expected to come to an end under the era of President Donald Trump, which will also spur China's emergence as a leader for global efforts to tackle climate change.



*Land – Atmosphere Interactions to Climate Change*  
Joni Kujansuu, PEEEX/University of Helsinki

The Earth is facing several environmental challenges on a global scale, called “Grand Challenges”. These Grand Challenges are tightly interlinked with processes starting in Arctic and boreal region. The growing population needs more fresh water, food and energy, which will affect our climate and air quality. Since the Grand Challenges are highly connected and interlinked, they cannot be solved separately. Therefore, the development of a framework is needed in which a multidisciplinary scientific approach has the potential to provide solutions that are typically tightly coupled with each other. In order to meet these tasks, a deep understanding of environmental processes based on new scientific knowledge is needed.

*The future of the Arctic cooperation of North-East Asia*  
Zhang Yao, SIIS

PART 1, The Cooperation basis: Common goal of the Arctic policies, Common identity, Common resource requirements, Common shipping interests and Common science research interests;  
PART 2, Restrict of the Arctic cooperation of North-East Asia: Political relations, Strategic mutual trust, Economic competition;  
PART 3, Promote North-East Asia Arctic cooperation: Increase the arctic strategic mutual trust and policy transparency, Coordinate position and interests in the arctic governance system, Strengthen cooperation in the field of technology, Coordinate with other countries’ position and policy on Arctic, Establishment of a variety of official and unofficial mechanism of cooperation, exchange and joint research.

*Indigenous Peoples role in the new geopolitical context*  
Gunn-Britt Retter, Saami Council

The Arctic is unique compared to many other regions in the world. One of the reasons being the great variety of indigenous peoples’ cultures surrounding the mainland in the circumpolar north. The Indigenous Peoples have both a long history on these lands and territories and are still using these lands today for their traditional livelihoods. In times of rapid changes as presently experienced in the Arctic, such as climate change, land use change, environmental change it is of particular importance that the indigenous peoples have the opportunity to be in charge of their own destiny and manage their livelihoods to maintain and develop the indigenous cultures into the future. What can indigenous cultures bring to the global discussions about climate change and environmental change.